(c) The purchase of various equipment is a regular business requirement as replacement of wornout and obsolete ones.

(d) No unnecessary purchase has been made.

Impact of open Sky Policy on lA

1230. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) wether it is a fact that the new Open Sky Policy will throw the Indian Airlines again in disarray as the Indian Airlines is almost limping back to earn a small profit this year;

(b) the average age of the aircrafts specially those plying to the North-Eastern sector;

(c) whether Government have any plan to phase-out the aged and almost vintage aircrafts; and

(d) if so, whether Government have plans to replace the existing fleet with the new aircraft?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) There is no change in the domestic air transport policy. Indian Airlines continues to be the market leader.

(b) No specific aircraft as such are dedicated to operate in the North Eastern sector. The average age of aircraft of the domestic airlines are as follows:—

Indian Airlines:	12.8 years
Jet Airways:	3.8 years
Sahara Airlines:	11.8 years

(c) and (d) Indian Airlines has plans to phase out/replace the aged aircraft in its fleet.

Labour Relations Committee in Air India

1231. SHRI C. O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Labour Relations Committee in Air India Ltd., is functioning as per the provision in the Air Corporation Repeal Act under Section 8(5);

(b) whether it is a fact that after Repeal of Corporation Act 1953,

the Management of Air India continued the LRC meetings till September, 1998 as per the provision of Section 8(5) of the Air Corporation (Transfer of Undertaking and Repeal) Act, 1994;

(c) how the management of Air India Ltd. has stopped calling its meeting of its own without clearance from Government since LRC is a statutory Body under the Act; and

(d) the steps taken by his Ministry to revive the functioning of LRC in Air India?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) At present, LRC is not functioning in Air India.

(b) Air India continued the functioning of LRC till 23.09.1998 even though there is no express saving provision under the Air Corporations (Transfer of Undertaking and Repeal) Act, 1994.

(c) With the passing of the Air Corporations (Transfer of Undertaking and Repeal) Act, 1994 both the Air Corporations Act and Air Corporation rules cease to exist.

(d) It is not necessary to revive the functioning of LRC in Air India for the reason that joint consultative committee has been constituted with various unions/associations/guilds functioning in Air India at the time of entering into settlement with the respective unions/associations/guilds.

Losses suffered by AI

1232. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the losses being incurred by AI are over Rs. 300 crores per year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that AI losses over the last 3 years have crossed Rs. 1000 crores;

(c) whether it is a fact that there are no signs of checking this slide; and

(d) what are Government's plans to make good these losses?